

needle. Numerous well recognised texts state that this causes loss of the aspirate into the body of the syringe, after which the aspirate will have to be repeated.¹

Metastasis to the track remains one of the rarer complications of needle biopsy or aspiration, but without further observation the effectiveness, or otherwise, of measures to reduce the risk will remain uncertain.

- 1 Melcher D, Lindan J, Smith R. *Practical aspiration cytology*. London: Churchill Livingstone, 1984.

Histomorphometry and immunohistochemistry of beef sausages

On reading the letter by Dr Boon concerning histological studies of beef sausages,¹ it occurs to me that, in view of the culinary nature of the specimens, *microwave* fixation might afford optimal results. Perhaps he should consider a collaborative study with his namesake, Dr ME Boon,² an authority on this technique.

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- 1 Boon AP. Histomorphometry and immunohistochemistry of beef sausages. *J Clin Pathol* 1990;43:435.
2 Boon ME, Kok LP. *Microwave cookbook of pathology: The art of microscopic visualisation*. Leiden: Coulomb Press, 1987:84-92.

Use of Tipp-Ex for surgical resection margins

We would like to draw attention to the recent letter¹ in which Tipp-Ex fluid was recommended as a convenient marker for surgical resection margins. Dr Harris has been "economical with the truth" in stating that processing equipment is "unaffected" by Tipp-Ex fluid. We have found that Tipp-Ex fluid rapidly blunts microtome knives. In the interests of economy and laboratory harmony we would like to set the matter straight.

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- 1 Harris MD. Tipp-Ex fluid: convenient marker for surgical resection margins. *J Clin Pathol* 1990;43:346.

BOOK REVIEWS

Exercises in Ultrastructural Pathology. Ed M Sobrinho-Simoes, JM Nesland, JV Johannessen. (Pp 227; £45.) Taylor & Francis. 1990. ISBN 1-56032-017-6.

This is a most unusual book, the stated aim of which is to allow pathologists to test their skills at interpreting ultrastructural appearances. Thirty cases are set out individually with a brief clinical history and, initially, a single "diagnostic" electron

photomicrograph. A set of questions are posed and then the authors go through the light microscopic and ultrastructural features of the lesion in question, providing further illustrations (all in black and white) to back up their diagnoses. The 30 cases presented comprise 24 tumours, three forms of glomerulonephritis, two storage diseases, and one case which covers two different viral infections. This is probably a fair reflection of the distribution of diagnostic electron microscopy in most laboratories. Of the tumours, however, there is rather undue bias on neuroendocrine neoplasms (which are pretty repetitious ultrastructurally) and on sarcomas. The quality of pictures throughout is perfectly acceptable, although not stunning. The explanatory descriptions and clinicopathological discussion of each case are of good quality, if a little unimaginative. In more than half the cases the authors admit that the diagnosis could have been readily reached without resorting to electron microscopy which rather detracts from their claims about the value of this technique. Given the inevitably idiosyncratic choice of cases in a book of this type, it is hard to imagine the type of individual who might purchase it. Nevertheless, candidates frightened of being shown electron microscopy in the final MRCPATH might find this a useful and informal text to flip through at the last minute.

CDM FLETCHER

Hospital-Acquired Infection. Principles and Prevention. 2nd ed. GAJ Ayliffe, BJ Collins, CJ Taylor. (Pp 140; soft cover £12.95.) Butterworths. 1990. ISBN 0-723-61259-5.

The authors of this very useful and popular book are recognised experts in the field, and the text reflects their long experience and essentially practical approach. The reader seeking a comment on just about any aspect of hospital infection will find it here (although the search for it may not always be easy). The book suffers somewhat from the authors' attempt to address both a specialist and a non-specialist audience, which leads to certain sections containing statements which may be inadequate for the former and probably mystifying to the latter. There are also some instances where more positive or less ambiguous statements would be helpful, and certain sections would benefit from being amplified at the expense of others which are unnecessarily wordy and repetitive. I hope there will be a third edition and that the opportunity will be taken to convert what is already a good book into the excellent one that it could be.

DM HARRIS

Nucleic Acid Probes. A Primer for Pathologists. Margaret A Piper, Elizabeth R Unger. (Pp 174; soft cover \$35.50.) Raven Press. 1989. ISBN 0-89189-283-4.

This is a timely, inexpensive, and highly readable paperback that is potentially of value to workers in all pathology subspecialties. In the first chapter the authors give a simple outline of nucleic acid chemistry and cell biology and the second chapter is devoted to the general principles of practical procedures including Southern blot and in-situ hybridisation and the polymerase chain reaction. Naturally, given its length, this is not a bench book but, as the pun in the title suggests, a gentle and well illustrated introduction. The

brief section on restriction fragment length polymorphism analysis would be easily understood by undergraduates. The third chapter considers diagnostic applications with emphasis on leukaemia, lymphoma, and genetic disease. This reviewer now knows a lot more about T cell gene rearrangements, and reading about them was a pleasure.

At the end of the book there is a very useful glossary of technical terms and quite an extensive bibliography comprised predominantly of 1987 and 1988 references. I highly recommend this book.

M WELLS

Ehrlichiosis. Ed JC Williams, I Kakoma. (Pp 164; £45.) Kluwer Academic Publishers. 1990. ISBN 0-7920-0691-0.

Ehrlichiae are small pleomorphic obligate intracellular micro-organisms belonging to the family Rickettsiaceae and can cause infection in both humans and animals, notably dogs. The book is based on a symposium in Washington: DC in 1988 but has been updated to include more recent data from experts on Ehrlichiae and related pathogens. The first of 13 chapters is an account of the historical background and global importance of ehrlichiosis and is followed by chapters on their cultivation, structure, biological properties, and pathophysiology. Chapter nine describes human ehrlichiosis in the USA after which there are discussions on the evolutionary history of chlamydiae, research on cowdriosis (heartwater disease in cattle), and current strategies in research on ehrlichiosis. The last chapter is an epilogue which provides a useful summing up of the contents of this undoubtedly comprehensive and authoritative account of the subject. Nevertheless, I doubt whether this book will be useful to pathologists in hospitals in northern Europe, but it may interest our veterinary colleagues and those in warmer climates.

RN PEEL

NOTICES

Mediastinal tumours—Pandora's Box

National Heart & Lung Institute
In association with
Royal Brompton & National Heart
Hospital, London

3-4 December, 1990

A two day symposium designed for radiologists, respiratory physicians, surgeons, oncologists and pathologists, but should be of interest to others involved in the field of thoracic medicine. Topics will include thymomas, lymphomas, germ cell, neural endocrine and rarer connective tissue tumours. An emphasis will be made on imaging and therapy.

Further details are available from:
Postgraduate Education Centre
National Heart & Lung Institute
Dovehouse Street, London SW3 6LY
Direct telephone: 071-351 8172 (24 hrs)
Facsimile: 071-376 3442



BPMF

University of London

**British Postgraduate Medical
Federation
Histopathology Course
1990-1991**

There will be a course for SHOs and registrars to provide training in histopathology for the new MRCPPath Part 1 examination which begins in May 1992. It will be held on Wednesday afternoons at St Bartholomew's Hospital, and will consist of lectures and slide seminars with emphasis on diagnosis and mechanisms of disease.

The course will run from 3 October 1990-13 March 1991 and is the first in a series of three. The second and third courses will be offered from October 1991 and October 1992 respectively.

Places are restricted and early application is advised.

Cost £517

Application forms, which must be returned by 24 August 1990, may be obtained from:

The Education Department, BPMF, 33 Millman Street, London WC1N 3EJ. Telephone 071-831 6222 extension 155

**Association of Clinical Pathologists
Junior Membership**

Junior membership of the Association is available to medical practitioners who have been engaged in the practice of pathology for a period of less than four years. Junior members are able to remain in this category for a maximum of six years or on the attainment of consultant status. The annual subscription is £24 for those resident in the United Kingdom and £55 for those overseas. The annual subscription may be claimed against tax.

Junior members receive the *Journal of Clinical Pathology* each month. Other benefits are reduced registration fees to attend ACP scientific meetings, all the documents regularly sent to full members of the Association including *ACP News*, which has a regular column for juniors, and the twice yearly summary of pathology courses included in the ACP programme of postgraduate education. Junior members have their own representative body, the Junior Members' Group, which has a direct input to Council.

For Junior Membership apply to: The Honorary Secretary, Association of Clinical Pathologists, School of Biological Sciences, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9QG. (0273) 678435.

**Second update in
cardiopulmonary medicine**

6-8 November, 1990

A three day modular course designed for cardiologists, respiratory physicians, anaesthetists, pathologists, paediatricians and related scientists. Poster sessions will be a feature of the course.

The Squibb Lecture

Monday 5 November, 1990 at 5.30 pm

"Neuroendocrine control of cardiovascular and respiratory systems."

To be given by Professor Julia Polak followed by a champagne reception.

Cardiology Day

Tuesday 6 November, 1990

Cardiomyopathies—Hypertrophic cardiomyopathies, genetics, cardiomyopathies in fetal life, paediatric cardiomyopathies. Atrioventricular septal defect—Development and structure, deficient atrioventricular septation, atrioventricular conduction tissues, genetics, pulmonary circulation in AVSD.

Cardiopulmonary Day

Wednesday 7 November, 1990

Endothelin in the heart and lung—Expression in tissue and cell culture, effects: tissue selectivity and vascular activities of endothelin, the heart and coronary circulation, the microvasculature, renal failure, renal function, endothelin in the lung: distribution, receptors and pharmacology, bronchopulmonary actions of endothelin.

Pulmonary Day

Thursday 8 November, 1990

Cystic fibrosis—Genetics and molecular biology, membrane defect, autonomic innervation and receptor defects, pathological changes, clinical disease spectrum, long term respiratory problems, microbiology and treatment, energy expenditure and nutritional requirements, lung transplantation.

Adult respiratory distress syndrome—Pathology, spectrum of the disease, ventilatory support, electrolyte disturbances, balance and nutrition, cardiovascular assessment and optimising oxygen delivery, recent advances in therapeutic intervention.

**Course Fee: £150.00 whole course
or £60.00 per day**

Further details may be obtained from:

The Postgraduate Education Centre,
National Heart & Lung Institute,
Dovehouse Street,
London SW3 6LY, UK.

Tel: 071-351 8172

(24 hr answering service)

Fax: 071-1376 3442

**Senior Registrar Management
Course, University of Keele**

The next management course for senior registrars in pathology directed by Professor Roger Dyson at the University of Keele will be held from lunchtime on Wednesday 12 December, 1990 to lunchtime on Friday 14 December, 1990. If you wish to receive a copy of the programme and booking information for this course, please contact Tanya Matthews, (0782) 621111 ext 3646, or write to the Centre for Health Planning and Management, Suite 2.1, Science Park, University of Keele, Staffs ST5 5SP.

**Register of primary immune
deficiencies**

In line with other European countries, a Register of all patients in the United Kingdom with primary immune deficiencies is being compiled. This is being organised by Dr J Gooi (Immunology Department, Blood Transfusion Service, Bridle Path, Leeds LS15 7TW).

To gain complete coverage we should be grateful if any physicians or general practitioners, who have not already been contacted and who are currently managing such patients, could send details of their patients to Dr Gooi.

Registration forms are available from Dr J Gooi (0532 645091) or Dr H Chapel (0865 817305, Immunology Department, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford OX3 9DU).

Corrections

We regret that an error appeared in the *Matters Arising* "Screening for bacteriuria" 1989;42:557. The microscopy and culture method was described as costing £0.90; it should have read £0.09. Our apologies.

Apologies are extended to Dr G Markey for having changed the gender of the patient reported in his paper 1990;43:282 "Monocyte esterase deficiency in malignant neoplasia". The patient was female.

An error appeared in the last sentence of the paper by Wood *et al* "Technique for identifying cutting artefacts in sections of undecalcified bone biopsy specimens" 1990;43:516. "This study shows conclusively that areas of fragmentation previously described as bone quality defects are not artefacts which may be created or excluded depending on the plane of the section. They, of course, are artefacts."